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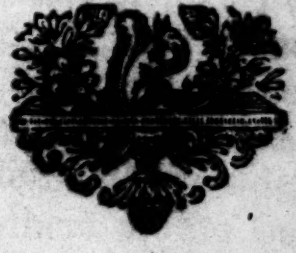
THE TUNER.

LETTER the Second.

To be OCCASIONALLY continu'd.

Two and Two make Four. ADDITION.



LONDON:

Printed for M. COOPER at the *Globe* in *Pater-noſter Row*; and Sold by Mr. LEWIS at *Covent-Garden*; Mrs. KINGMAN at the *'Change*; and G. WOODFALL at *Charing-Croſs*. 1754.

[Price Six-pence.]

THE

TUNER.

LETTER the Second.

To the OCCASIONALLY continued.

Tuo cum fonte paratus. Horat.

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Printed for M. Cooper at the Globe in Pater-noster-Row; and Sold by Mr. Lewis at Dunstable; Mrs. Kinaston at the Crown; and G. Woodfall at the Charing-Cross. 1754.

[Price Six-pence.]

TO

EUGENIUS.

WELL, *Eugenius*, you ſay you have laugh'd heartily at my Letter, ſo have I at your Anſwer.

The Letter in general is liked by the Laughers; the more Serious and Profound think there is not Solemnity enough in it; and that it rather ſkims over, than diſcuſſes the Variety of Subjects it glances to; not conſidering, that too much of the beſt Muſic tires: and that though ſome Matters deſerve a ſerious Attention, others are to be but barely hinted at.

The Editor of the *Review* for this Month, has given me a Rap over the Fingers, but in ſo polite a manner, that while I ſmarted, I could not help ſaying, Sir, I am your very humble Servant.

An Event as droll, as extraordinary, has happen'd. A certain Gentleman, Mr. ——, whom you very well know, has not only ſuf-

fer'd, but encouraged his being complimented as Author of the Letter; and whenever the Queſtion is put to him, denies it with ſo civilly aſſenting a Leer, as almoſt implies Proof poſitive. This Warning I give that Gentleman, that though I neither am, nor chuſe to be known at preſent—the Time may come—therefore the longer I lie conceal'd, the greater muſt be his Shame on the Diſcovery.

Some object at my not pointing out the Beauties in thoſe Works I particularly cenſur'd; I wiſh the Objectors would ſhew me what Beauties I have omitted.

I might indeed have ſaid a great deal more of the *Analyſis of Beauty*, but have done, I thought ſufficiently, to manifeſt my Eſteem for one of the beſt Works that has of late appear'd; and to which I am the moſt oblig'd.—

I think my Judgments have in general been pretty impartial; and for a new Inſtance—you aſk my Opinion of the *Dreamer*. I anſwer, it bears one certain Mark of Perfection; which is, a Work's being *tantamount* to its *Title*.

On *Thurſday* the 6th Inſtant were publiſh'd two new Tragedies, VIRGINIA and CONSTANTINE, which I ſend incloſ'd with my Remarks thereon, and in return deſire yours.—

I had often ſaid before I ſaw, or read, and am now convinced ſince I have ſeen, and read

VIR-

VIRGINIA; that it muſt fail by Defect of *Quantitative* Matter for a Tragedy, agreeable to what is advanced in my former Letter (p. 29.)

A Man is ſtruck with an Incident or two in a Story; then without contemplating the Object on every ſide, or reflecting whether it can afford *Dramatic Quantity for five Acts*, or not; precipitately reſolves to write a Tragedy: throws back all Action and Diſtreſs to the *fifth*, to which he creeps through *four* miſerable Acts.

A Dramatic Paradox.

A Subject may turn out compleatly *Quantitative* in *one*, *two*, or *three* Acts; yet be ſhort and deficient in *five*.—For Inſtance of the former, read that excellent Picture of domeſtic Diſtreſs, THE FATAL EXTRAVAGANCE, written by the late AARON HILL, Eſq; undoubtedly the beſt of his Theatric Works, and worthy of any Pen.—Of the latter—ſee the GAMESTER; a Miſnomer for a Tragedy.—THE DEATH OF SOCRATES, a *Comedy*, would be as proper a Denomination.

Though the Prologue prefix'd to *Virginia* hint its Author to be *Sophoclean*, no Tincture of Acquaintance there, appears, either in the Conduct of his Piece, or Vigour of his Style. The *Rules* of the Stage he obſerves not; ſo it appears, that obſerve, or obſerve them not,

it is all the ſame, where true Genius does not inſpire.—

And to his Style bordering on the very poor, what moſt favourably can be ſaid, is couch'd in thoſe Lines of Mr. *Pope*,

———*Such Lays as neither ebb nor flow,*
Correctly cold, and regularly low,
———————*one quiet Tenour keep,*
We cannot blame indeed, but we may ſleep.

But having a Bird of nobler Flight in view, I ſhall curſorily truſs up, and diſpatch the trembling *Virginia*; then after the *Roman* Eagle that proudly tow'rs Defiance to the Critic's Shaft.

The Performers of *Virginia* in point of Dreſs ſeem'd rather to repreſent Perſonages of the ſplendid Court of *Auguſtus*, than the plain, rough, hardy Republicans of the early Ages of *Rome*.

P. 2. For the ſtern Aſpect, and declining Years
Of *Appius*.

The Actor diſplay'd a youthful Countenance, and affected Elegance of Dreſs.—Whoſe the Fault was, I don't know.

Icilius was exorbitantly fine for a *Plebeian* of thoſe Times.— So much for Dreſs.—Now for Morals.——

P. 3. *Claudius*. Cou'd we prevail, but on my
Siſter MARCIA,

She

She is VIRGINIA's *truſted* Friend—ſhe might
Work glorious Miſchief.

That *Claudius* a *Patrician* ſhould employ his Siſter to debauch a *Plebeian* Girl, is as ſhocking in Morality, nay Probability, conſidering the Pride of the *Roman* Ladies, as it is abſolutely falſe in Point of Hiſtory. *Marcia* is an inconſiſtent Medley of the Author's own Creation, and I fancy modell'd on the imperfect Character of *Eriphilè* in RACINE's *Iphigenie*. —— The Performance of a new Actreſs with a graceful Figure, pleaſing Voice, and praiſe-worthy Deportment for a firſt Attempt, drew off the Attention of the Public from the Impropriety of the Character ſhe repreſented. She ſaved the Piece in the Part it was weakeſt, and moſt liable to be attack'd.

P. 3. The jarring Elements, as ſoon wou'd mix
their Contraries.———

What, and how many are the Elements? Do they never mix their Contraries?

P. 6. *Claudius. Honour* commands, all *private*
Ties ſhou'd yield to *public* Good.

Therefore, Siſter, you muſt turn Procureſs to *Appius*. ——What a modeſt Brother! what a ſtrange Perverſion of *Honour*, and *public Good* is here!

P.

P. 7. ——————to pierce *Icilius'* Heart,
And *glut* his fierce Revenge, *Appius* wou'd
wade thro' *Seas* of Blood.

He muſt have been a *tall Man*, a *very tall Man* indeed. I do not remember to have read of any Mortal's *wading* through *Seas* of any kind, but the gigantic, one-eyed POLYPHEMUS.

——————*Graditurque per Æquor*
Jam medium, nec dum fluctus latera ardua
tinxit. VIRG.

He Stalks enormous thro' the midmoſt Tides,
And ſcarce the topmoſt Surges reach his Sides.
PITT.

As after being *glutted*, Drink is requiſite, the Figure would be better follow'd thus:

Appius would gulp——
Down Seas of Blood.

Claudius is a moſt unconſcionable Brother, he would hackney his poor Siſter to every Vice.

Thou muſt ſow Diſcord, *Marcia*,
Between the Lovers. ——
P. 8. 'Tis a righteous Fraud
To cheat them into Safety.

To remove his Siſter's Scruples, *Claudius* tells her, *Appius* means to wed *Virginia*, tho' he

he is convinc'd of the contrary. ——— An exaggerated Villain!

P. 9. Was ever Maid in ſuch a piteous Taking, as *Marcia* is here? How through the Play ſhe is oblig'd to ſee-ſaw it betwixt *Love* and *Friendſhip!*—This Soliloquy might be not improperly tagg'd with

Thus Vice and Virtue play bo-peep,
They ſleeping wake, and waking ſleep.

P. 10. VIRGINIUS. When bold Oppreſſion ſtalks, let come what may,
Honour and Age ſhall hold their Courſe.

I believe this was meant for a ſublime Sentiment, but it is obſcure, the Meaning is not obvious—to me at leaſt.

P. 12. VIRGINIUS.——— their great Anceſtors
Together *ſluic'd* their Veins in Honour's Cauſe,
And purchas'd Immortality.

Why are the unoffending Arteries, the firſt Offspring of the Heart, forgot? *Sluic'd* is a moſt deſpicable Word; means quite contrary to what (I believe) the Author intended: for here it either muſt ſignify the horrid Act of *Suicide*, or gentler Operation of Self-Phlebotomy. But the latter is practis'd rather to adhere to foul Mortality, than to *purchaſe* clean-ſhirted *Immortality*.

Act

Act II. p. 33. *Appius*——my Paſſion's o'er,
And nought but *luſty* Appetite remains.

I doubt that *luſty Appetite* remains, where *Paſſion's o'er.*

Which ſpite of all thy peeviſh Scorn and Rage,
I will indulge to ſuch luxurious Height,
That gorg'd at length, and *glutted*, it ſhall ſicken
And turn away from thy pall'd Charms with loathing

Glutted, a favourite Word in this Play, ſhould precede *gorg'd*, as Cauſes do their Effects. — All this *luſty* Declaration is in Imitation of *Polydore.*

The luſty *Bull ranges thro' all the Field*, &c.

I'll ruſh upon her in a Storm of Love,
Beat down her Guard of Honour all before me,
Surfeit on Joys till ev'n Deſire grow ſick;
Then by long Abſence Liberty regain,
And quite forget the Pleaſure and the Pain.

ORPHAN.

I'll meet the haughty Maid
As JOVE met SEMELE —— in *Thunder.*
Hear this, ye Mortals, and let looſe your Wonder!

Pray, *Eugenius*, take notice, that the laſt Line, is mine. — But that neither you, nor any other Reader may wonder long, I'll tell you Lady *Semele*'s Story; and hence the Inapplicability of the Alluſion here will be evinced. SEMELE, like all kept Miſtreſſes, would

would be ſtill aſking for more, and more.— And as nothing hurts their ſilly Pride ſo much, as that poor Spouſe ſhould enjoy any thing with the Huſband, they can't come at; ſuch as going to Court with him in his Birth-Day Suit, &c. ſo ſhe made her Lover *Jupiter* give her an unguarded Promiſe, that he would grant whatever ſhe ſhould aſk. — The Requeſt was, that at his next amorous Viſitation, he'd come to her array'd in all the Majeſty of Heaven. — Her ſecret Motive was, that after ſuch a Proof of his thundering Love, Wife *Juno* could boaſt no Superiority over her. The God relunctantly, obſerv'd his Oath; SEMELE periſhed in the Encounter, and was conſum'd to Aſhes by his fiery Embraces.———Hence learn Kept-Miſtreſſes to beware, to know where to ſtop; and not too importunately to aſk Extravagancies, that muſt end in your Deſtruction, or at leaſt Expulſion. This is my mythological Senſe of the Fable, and can be proved by undoubted Authority, if requiſite, in Contradiction to the vulgar Opinion.

Act III. Scene I. p. 35, 36. *Appius'* and *Claudius'* Reflections on Female Virtue, and their Treatment of *Marcia* is unmanner'd, and brutal.

P. 37. Will *nothing* rid me of my Miſery!

Ex nihilo nihil, in nihilum nil poſſe reverti.

LUCRET.

Nothing can come of nothing.

P. 38. Great Gods! behold me here a Wretch compleat,
The Work of *your own* Hands, in *all your* Wrath.

Thus would I imitate theſe Lines in *French*, and in full as proſaic, and unpoetical a Manner as that, which prevails thro' this Play.

A me pourſuivre les Demons ſont engagés,
Je ſuis le Chef-d'œuvre des Dieux enragés.

P. 39. ——————but in thy Breaſt
P. 40. There's ſomething dark—and where 'tis *dark*, 'tis *foul.*

This is not a receiv'd Axiom; Things may be *foul* yet *bright*: *dark* yet *clean.*

P. 41. *Icilius* having learn'd by Letter from his Friend *Valerius* the imminent Danger *Virginia* is in, idles away a great deal of Time on the Stage, inſtead of flying to her immediate Succour.

P. 22. And ſhall I faithful add?

There are other ſhort Lines, which I think are not to be allow'd.

P. 44. APPIUS. ——————malicious Gods!
From this Time I renounce your Temples, Altars,
Your *falſe precarious* Aid!

But ſoon after, forgetful of this Renunciation, imprecates,

O for the Bolts of *Jove*
To wield amongſt them!

P. 45. To quell the Rabble-Rout—

is a very low Expreſſion.

I'll triumph *glutted* with Revenge and Love.

glutted again, excites a naſty and butcherly Idea.

Act IV. Scene I. p. 54.— but let me like a God
At once ſtretch out my Arm, and ſeize my Prey.

This Image is taken from the Hiſtory of the *High-German* Rat-Catcher, who in a darken'd Room us'd to put Crums of Bread and Cheeſe in his Hand, which he *ſtretch'd out*: drawn by the Lure, and impell'd by Hunger, the Rats advanc'd within his fatal Graſp, and ſo he *ſeiz'd his Prey*. See the private Memoirs of the Learned of *Leipſic*.

P. 56. *Icilius*. ———a bloody Fray enſued,
And all was going to Wreck.

poor and ignoble Phraſe.———

Act V. Scene I. between *Virginius* and his Daughter is affecting.

P. 60. *Icilius*. ———but ev'n now
I met him *going forth*.

going forth is too low for the Dignity of Tragedy.

P. 66. *Virginius.* 'Thou Traitor,' *&c.* and all his Part in this Scene is well wrought, and was maſterly executed; and eke *Virginia*'s.

P. 68. *Virginius* ſtands ſtill, deaf to his Daughter's Cries, and unreſiſting to *Appius*'s bearing her off. Is it natural? *Virginius* was a *Roman*, brave, warm, and choletic. While the Father and Daughter act on the Fore-part of the Stage; not to ſeem unoccupied, the *luſty Decemvir* and his Pimp ſhould have ſome Game to amuſe them, as the *impenetrable Secret*, &c.

P. 70. *Virginius*'s preparing her to die, I diſlike.—Would it not be better, that rouz'd by her Cries for ſome pitying Hand to reſcue her from Shame, by putting an End to her Life. (Paternal Fondneſs conquer'd by Rage) he ſhould in the Hurry and Violence of the Tumult give the fatal Blow. It would be more conformable to Nature, Hiſtory, and be more dramatic; here 'tis a cool and deliberate Parricide. Fili-cide, if us'd, would be a properer Term.

P. 71. His Daughter ſlain, and *Virginius* gone off, the Action of the Play is over.

APPIUS. ——————Perdition ſeize me
But he has murder'd her.

a very inelegant Phraſe for the Dignity of a *Decemvir*; and the Paſſion of a Lover.

P. 72. *Virginia*'s pantomimic Manner of dying is but pretty, at beſt.——

P.

P. 73. *Icilius*' blubbering is ridiculous, his Rage is Lunacy.

Blaſt theſe Eyes,
Some ſpeedy Fire from Heav'n!. dry up all Sight!
Leſt looking here I ſtrike againſt the Gods
That doom'd me ſuch a Wretch.

If he had ſtruck againſt the Gods, the Odds were at leaſt, ſix to one, he would not have hit them.

Virginius's coming on again, is undramatic, and cold.

——look here! his impious Blood
Smokes on my Dagger's Point.

Whoſe Blood? this is a ſliding Aſſertion; the Audience, no doubt, thinks it is *Appius*'s; but it could neither be his, nor *Claudius*'s, without going againſt ſtated hiſtorical Facts, which is by no means pardonable, not even in fabulous Story.

Virginius. ——my old Heart ſplits with Sorrow.
Sweet hapleſs Flow'r——

this is another of the ſhort Lines.

Untimely cropt by the fell Planter's Hand.

This Image ſavours more of the Author's Fancy, than of the Father's Grief.

The *Prologue* and *Epilogue* have been juſtly applauded, and all the Performers deſerv'd their Proportion of Praiſe.

The

The Author in the printed Copies of *Virginia* has mark'd the Pitching of the Voice, and pantomimic Buſineſs of it all through; in order, I ſuppoſe, that the true Manner of performing it may be diffus'd to all the reſident and itinerant acting Companies in the three Kingdoms.

Martyr'd VIRGINIA is ſucceeded by virtuous CONSTANTINE, worthy Sequels to the two foregoing Tragedies in my former Letter; and hence the Meaning of the Motto is made out, to wit, that "*Two and two make* "*four:*" which bold Aſſertion by the following, as well as the preceding Animadverſions, will, I flatter myſelf, amount to mathematical Demonſtration.

Let us pay due Deference to the firſt Chriſtian Emperor, a Subject very proper for a Chriſtian Teacher. — But ere we proceed farther, it were not amiſs to premiſe the Reaſons of the Severity of our Criticiſms, which are ———

The Author values himſelf for being a Claſſic of the deepeſt Dye, and deſpiſes all Cotemporaries of Genius, who wear not the Livery of the Antients.

How tremendous to ſome, how impudent to others, will this Attempt appear! As a Man, to be fairly tried, ought be tried by his Peers; ſo a claſſical Writer ſhould be judg'd but by claſſical Quotations. The Neceſſity of a Parade thereof

thereof on this Occaſion muſt plead its Excuſe.

Claſſical Learning deſerves every Reſpect, where it contributes to make its Poſſeſſor modeſt, polite, and thereby amiable; Contempt, when arrogant, and ſupercilious.—It helps, 'tis true, but gives not *Genius*; whoſe Maſk it makes too oft be worn by a ridiculous Self-Sufficiency—but a Truce to moral Reflections, and to the critical Enquiry.

Conſtantine is a deviating wide Tranſlation of the *French* Tragedy, *Maximien*, written by Monſieur DE LA CHAUSSE'E. Occaſion'd by a Word that was dropt in the *Bedford* Coffee-Houſe, the Author, Tranſlator, *Plagiary*, or what you pleaſe to call him, has thought it neceſſary to ſlide in a very circumſpect Advertiſement, in the Page under his *Dramatis Perſonæ*, which runs thus:—"It is almoſt ridiculous, "after the ill Succeſs of this Play upon the "Stage, to tell the Readers I took *part* of the "*Fable*, and the *Tranſlation* of *one* only Line "from a *French* Tragedy called *Maximian*. "But all Concealments of this Kind are diſin-"genuous."

Though the original *French* be but poor, more than Part of the Fable is taken from it; if it entirely had been follow'd, it would have been by ſo much the better.—To take the Tranſlation of a Line, is a Phraſe I don't very well underſtand.——

Act I. p. 7. *Fulvia.* —" Till Nature hear my
" Cries thro' all her Works."

To effect this, ſhe muſt out-bawl all the *Billinſgate* Matrons in Chorus; and have more than *Stentorean* Lungs.—What a vile torturing of theſe two elegant Lines;

If there's a Pow'r above us, and that there is,
All Nature cries aloud throughout her Works.
ADDISON.

P. 9. *Fulv.* Now the Cloud is *opening* into Thunder.

Thunder being of an exploſive Nature, it would be better deſign'd by breaking, burſting, or ſome ſuch Term. The *Opening* of Clouds denotes fair Weather; as that of the human Countenance good Humour.

P. 14. *Albinus.* What Pow'r can ſhake that
Temper, which unmov'd
Ruled the fierce Hour of Fight, like OCEAN's GOD,
Who *ſits* upon the Storm, and guides its Raging.

Rides in the Whirlwind, and directs the Storm.
ADDISON.

Leſt School-boys, by too great a Veneration for the *Tranſlator* of *Horace*, ſhould be miſled in Point of Doctrine, let us examine the Truth of this *Simile*; and VIRGIL ſhall be our Arbiter. — We find in his firſt *Æneid*, ver. 55. and what follows, that enraged *Juno* (who certainly was well inform'd) applies to *Æolus*, to ſell her a Storm, and not to *Neptune*,

tune, Ocean's God; whoſe chief Pleaſure was to ſmooth the rumpled Surface of the Deep. And for Proof only, to avoid the too long Quotation of the Riſing, and Subſiding of the Storm, obſerve

——————*levat ipſe Tridenti*
Et vaſtas aperit Syrtes, & temperat Æquor,
Atque Rotis ſummas levibus perlabitur undas.
ENEID. l. 1. v. 148.

With his huge Trident the majeſtic God,
Clear'd the wild Syrtes, and compos'd the Flood;
Then mounted on his radiant Car he rides,
And wheels along the Level of the Tides. PITT.

And a little lower,

Sic cunctus Pelagi cecidit Fragor; Æquora poſtquam
Proſpiciens Genitor, cæloque invectus aperto,
Flectit Equos, currûque volans dat lora ſecundo.

So did the roaring Deep their Rage compoſe,
When the great Father of the Floods aroſe:
Rapt by his Steeds, he flies in open Day,
Throws up the Reins, and ſkims the wat'ry Way. PITT.

P. 15. *Maxim.* ——————all ye Pow'rs
- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -
Inſpire our Councils, ſhed your Influence o'er them.
Then if I fall——let the Gods anſwer for it.

There is a Smartneſs in this Threat to the Gods.

Act II. p. 17. *Conſtantine*'s humane and pacific Deportment is not unlike to, but perhaps borrow'd from, *Tamerlane*'s.

P. 18. *Conſtant.* ——————and now a Tear
Stands trembling on the *Luſtre* of thy Eye.

This is too pretty for *Conſtantine*, and even for common Senſe.

P. 19. *Fulvia.* Her *Matron* Virtue ——————
Is new.——————

All through this Scene the Embracings of the Emperor and Empreſs are too frequent, and ſmack of *Carnality*; beſides there is an Unmercifulneſs, and Indecency in the Reiteration, before the Attendants, Lictors, captive Princes; but more particularly before the holy Prieſts, whoſe charitable, and ſympathetic Lips, with very little Temptation, water! —Whether by Accident, or ſo contriv'd, the ſtimulated Eagle's Wings flutter'd Symptoms of Incontinency, in Imitation of the *Oſtrich*'s in the *Sorcerer*.

P. 22. ALBIN. ——————there are Witneſſes,
There are, my Lord, for Things *impoſſible*.

Poſſibly there may be ſuch; but would it be eaſy to find People to believe them?

Act III. p. 28. How ſublime, how ſtriking is the viſionary Dagger to MACBETH——————

Is this a Dagger which I ſee before me?
Thou marſhal'ſt me the Way, that I was going;
And

And on thy Blade, and Dudgeon Gouts of Blood,
&c. SHAKESPEAR.

How poorly, and untimely imitated! how ridiculous and vapouriſh is *Fulvia*'s Start, and Exclamation ———

———Oh my Brain.
See there, my Lord! it hovers o'er your Head!
A Poniard ſtreaming Blood! the goary Drops
Glare thro' the midnight Darkneſs: Earth and Heav'n
That Hand!—O Nature, univerſal Parent
Whoſe is *that Hand?* does Mercy dwell in Heav'n!
I'll gaze no more—oh! hide me in thy Boſom,
Leſt my Brain turn, and I run mad for ever.

This is really laughable.

P. 35. You are a Chriſtian, Truth is your Religion;
You are a Soldier, Honour's your Profeſſion.

are two very fine Lines.

The Working up of *Conſtantine*'s Jealouſy in this Scene is too ſudden, and too like that of *Othello*'s; which with the acknowledged ſuperior Excellence of the ſame Perfomer, ſtruck moſt People ſo glaringly, that I ſhall quote but a few Inſtances of the Similarity; and that to avoid the Imputation of a groundleſs, or vague Aſſertion ——— *Fulvia*'s Solicitation for *Aurelian*, is almoſt congenial with that of *Deſdemona*'s for *Caſſio*. *Albinus* and *Maximian*, are *Iago* divided into two.

P. 36. *Conſtant.* What means this paſſion'd Repetition?

Othel. Why by Heav'n thou eccho'ſt me.

P. 40. *Conſt.* ——— And thou, O Jealouſy
Invok'd, ariſe from thy profoundeſt Hell.

Othel. Ariſe black Vengeance from thy hollow Hell.

By way of Improvement is added,

P. 40. *Conſt.* Ariſe, and with thee bring thy kindred Fiends,
Revenge, and Murder—I'll employ them all.

Mr. BARRY's acting of theſe two Lines was equal to any thing I have ever ſeen on the *French*, or *Engliſh* Theatres. ——— We are here reminded of

———my great Revenge
Had *Stomach* for them all.
Act IV. p. 43. *Conſtant.* Hell and Devils!

is the ſame Meaſure with,

Othello's—Goats and Monkeys.

P. 43. *Conſtant.* Where is my Wife? my Wife!
O Memory, Reflection, Reaſon;

that is; have a care, or we ſhall run into OTHELLO's Words,

P. 44. The Father's implicate Accuſation of his Daughter, is horrible; and not in the *French* Play; nor in Nature.

Conſtant.

Conſtant. There is a ſavage Juſtice in thy Purpoſe
Horridly pleaſing——

Othel. ——— good, good,
The Juſtice of it pleaſes, very good.

P. 49. *Conſtant.* Take heed; be cautious, for you tread on Fires.

This is a bolder Figure than *Horace* would have riſqued; he being thoroughly perſuaded, one cannot walk on Fire without feeling it: therefore all Admonition would be uſeleſs. Inaſmuch as a *Tranſlator* cannot with Modeſty refuſe Sentence from his Original, I fancy that *Horace* here would have expreſſed himſelf ſomewhat ſimilar to

——*incedis per ignes*
Suppoſitos Cineri doloſo. HOR.

You treat adventrous, and with Caution tread
On Fires, with faithleſs Embers over-ſpread.
FRANCIS.

This is a poor round-about Expoſition of *Horace*'s Senſe.

P. 50. *Conſtant.* If ſhe be falſe—how innocent ſhe looks!——

Then Heav'n that pour'd theſe thouſand Graces round her,
Marrs its own loveliest Work and mocks all Truth.

Othel. If ſhe be falſe, oh—then Heav'n mocks itſelf.

P.

P. 54. The beſt Comment on the Abſurdity of *Albinus*, arreſting *Maximan*, would be to read the *French* Author———

Act V. p. 55. *Maximian*, and *Albinus* come on as good Friends as ever, and without informing us, how *Albinus* pleaded his Excuſe for having arreſted him.

P. 55. *Albin.* ———the Palace ours,
Its *ſleeping Conſtantine*,——hark, my Lord,
(it thunders.)

The continued Thundering here is not from the *French* Play; but is quite of the *Engliſh* Scribe's fertile Invention: and why *ſleeping* CONSTANTINE does not awake to the Noiſe, is one of his tragic Secrets.

P. 56. *Maxim.* —Theſe well-omen'd Thunders
Like Drums and Trumpets in the Day of Battle,
Shall drown the Cries of Death.

Comparing Thunder to Drums and Trumpets, is comparing a Mountain to a Molehill.——Were Drums (ſuch as ours) uſed in thoſe Days?

P. 57. The Phantoms that appear to *Maximian* ſubſequent to the preceding Thunders, ſhould rather deter from, than encourage him to perpetrate the Deed.

Maximian's Return is unneceſſary, ridiculous, and ſtill gives *Conſtantine* a greater Chance to awake.

P.

P. 58. *Maximian* behind the Scenes, as he ſtabs *Conſtantine*, cries

This for Ambition; this for my Revenge:

in what was he injured?

This for my Daughter's Wrongs.

Of theſe Wrongs he *(Maximian)* was the Artificer jointly with *Albinus*, who rejoices on the Stage, while the horrid Deed is executed.——This is not unlike *Macduff*'s repeated ſtabbing of *Macbeth* for different Cauſes.

Maximian brings the Sword reeking with *Conſtantine*'s Blood on the Stage———

————————I'll leave it there.
I brought it forth, to ſee what richer Drops
Fed the proud Heart, whoſe Inſolence once aw'd me,
Whoſe Spirit towr'd above me.

This is a diſtant Imitation of

What! will th' aſpiring Blood of Lancaſter
Sink in the Ground? I thought it wou'd have mounted. SHAKESPEAR.

P. 59. The Alluſion of the Riſe, and Setting of the *Sun*, is *puerile*, and what *Horace* calls, *purpureus pannus*.

P. 60. Who is *Cornelia* that comes on in the fifth Act? where has ſhe been during the preceding Part of the Action?

Fulvia.

Fulvia. ——— my glowing Eyes
Juſt ſtarting from their *Orbs*.

The Eyes are call'd *Orbs*; and where they are contain'd, *Orbits*.

P. 61. The *ever*-damning Deed of Self-Deſtruction.

This is an ingenious and praiſe-worthy Diſtinction from the temporary damning Deed in this Life; which is, to write a bad Play.

P. 62. *Aurelian* returns here a dumb Witneſs, gives us no Account of what has been done to him, or where he has been.

P. 66. *Maximian.* ——— [ſtabs himſelf.]
For my laſt Groan gives you the Univerſe. [dies.

Et mon dernier ſoupir te livre l'Univers.
DE LA CHAUSSE'E.

Fulvia looks here as ſilly after her Father's Death; as *Almeria* does in the *Mourning Bride*.

It would have been better for the Author to have ſtuck to the *French* Tragedy; than to have had ſo borrowing an Eye to our *Engliſh* Plays, and thoſe that are the moſt known.

Incidit in Scyllam dum vult vitare Charybdim.

Which in the Senſe of a Wag is — running away from the *French* Shore, he daſh'd againſt *Scilly* Rocks. ———

In

In point of Performance Mr. *Barry* did all could be done; but then the chief Strokes were too like *Othello*. Mrs. *Bellamy*'s infirm State of Health hinder'd her exerting herſelf. — In the Beginning of this Winter ſhe play'd *Athenais* better than ever I had ſeen it before; and I am aſſur'd, that during the Run of *Romeo* in both Houſes, her Superiority in *Juliet*'s Balcony Scene was never diſputed.

It is hard for a Company to intereſt an Audience in Behalf of a Play, in which there is ſcarce a Line—written to the Heart.

It muſt be own'd that *Conſtantine* is better phras'd, than *Virginia* is. You may aſk why the latter has ſucceeded, and the former not? —Join'd to the acting, and a powerful Protection, *Horace partly* furniſhes the Anſwer in his Art of Poetry———

Interdum ſpecioſa Locis, moretaque recte
Fabula, nullius Veneris, ſine Pondere, & Arte,
Valdius oblectat Populum, meliuſque moratur
Quam verſus inopes rerum, nugæque canoræ,

which I venture thus to tranſlate.—It happens ſometimes that a Piece, lucky in the Diſpoſition of its Scenes, and in which the Characters are well mark'd and ſupported, though in point of Style, it hath neither Grace, Energy, nor Elegance, ſhall pleaſe the People better, and draw their Attention more, than jingling Trifles, and Verſes void of Sentiment.

Thus the Compiler of *Conſtantine* tranſlates it,

For when the Sentiment, and Diction pleaſe,
And all the Characters are wrought with Eaſe;
Your Play tho' void of Beauty, Force, and Art,
More ſtrongly ſhall delight, and warm the Heart,
Than where a lifeleſs Pomp of Verſe, appears,
And with ſonorous Triſles charms the Ears.
FRANCIS.

The two firſt Lines, I apprehend, imply ſomething very near Perfection; and the third Line, Nonſenſe—for how can a Play be void of *Beauty*, *Force*, and *Art*,

—Where the Sentiment and Diction pleaſe,
And all the Characters are wrought with Eaſe.

To him and his Brother Tragedy-Wrights of this Year, (Strangers to the Φοβος και Ελεος, the Terror and Compaſſion of the *Greeks*; and none of whom like *Euripides* will ever deſerve the Epithet of Τραγικωτατος, moſt tragic; that is, who knew beſt how to excite thoſe Paſſions) I recommend as a *Memento Mori* from *Horace*,

——— *mediocribus eſſe Poetis*
Non Di, non Homines, non conceſſere Columnæ.

Which in *Engliſh* ſignifies; againſt Mediocrity in Poetry, Critics, Printers, and Publiſhers, cry out — Damnation.

His

His Prologue ends in the common hackney'd ſupplicating Way; to wit,

Yet if with modeſt Hope, our Author aim
At your Applauſe—for your Applauſe is Fame.

Who can withſtand ſuch coaxing?

Let him to-night your wonted Candour find,
Oh! be the Critic's Eye a *little* blind.

Purblind, I ſuppoſe. From modeſt Hope, he proceeds to a very modeſt Requeſt.

And if to you, ye Fair, he pours his Heart,
To *your Diſtreſſes* gives *his tend'reſt Art*.

What *Art*? and *how gives*? this is *double-entendre—iſh*.

To Beauty, Virtue, and to you he ſues,
As you inſpir'd ——————.

They deny the Charge.

—————— oh patronize his Muſe.

The Muſe that deſerves, is always ſure of their Patronage.

I'd rather Prologues were omitted, if not written in a manly-ſpirited Way; a whining Author with Doubts and Fears about him, has no more Buſineſs with the well-trod active Scene, than a Coward has in the Field of Battle. I humbly offer the following ſhort Specimen, as a Hint to be improv'd on by the dramatic Poets for the next Year.

Our

Our Author ſcorns the ſneaking trivial Art,
Too oft diſgracing the poor Prologue's Part,
Submiſſive, ſimp'ring, pretty Things to ſay
In favour of a—Thing—he calls—a Play!
Or teize the Ladies with a ſick'ning Pray'r
To take his puny Off-ſpring to their tender Care.
— — — — — — — —
Solicits boldly to decide his Cauſe,
The judging Few of Art, *great* Nature's *Laws.*
And ſays, by no affected Terror aw'd,
Damn it, if bad—but if it pleaſe, applaud.

Thus began the *Epilogue* to *Conſtantine*;

Well! you expect—ſo ſays the Taſte in vogue,
To theſe *ſad Scenes* a *laughing* Epilogue.

Sad Scenes indeed they were; but how the Author of the Epilogue could think it would prove a laughing one, I can't find out.—No more of it is worth the quoting.

The Dedication is to the Right Honourable THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD, the Refuge of poetical Sinners. Thus ſays the Author to him,

"Its Fate was early determined, and in "ſuch a Manner, that I very little flatter my-"ſelf, it can be worthy of your Lordſhip's "Patronage, *or may preſume to boaſt it was "once honour'd with your Approbation.*"

How often does the Politeneſs of the Great entail a Mortgage on their Underſtanding to the Public—The reſt is full of elaborate *Congées*, and to the very Ground.

In

In the midſt of our tragic Diſtreſs, Mr. HENRY JONES brought us his poetical *Relief*, in which true Genius glows.——— Among others this Line has been objected to,

P. 6. l. 7. Bright *Viſion's* ECCHO to th' enchanted Eye.

A Lady of Taſte who eſteems the Poem in general, inſiſted to the Author, it was exceptionable.—My Opinion was aſk'd—I declined giving it—Who would differ from a Lady?—and what's worſe, who would pronounce againſt a formidable Poet to his Face.—But to you, *Eugenius*, my Sentiment is, that until we can delight the Ear with the Beauties of *Painting*; the enchanting the Eye with the *Concerting* of Sound, or with its mimic *Ecchо*, will appear new to many; and no doubt will be approv'd of by others.

I am, SIR,

London, March 5th, 1754.

Your, &c.

P. S. The modeſt *Defence of Gaming* is eſteem'd.——

I have thrice read the Ode on Mr. PELHAM's Death; and have thrice been pleas'd.

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